MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY | EXTENSION

TABLE 2. PASTURE MANAGEMENT CHART

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Time	Operation	Reason For	Result In
(1) Before spring growth begins.	Harrow both ways.	To distribute droppings and applied manure.	More uniform grazing and fertility.
	Apply fertilizer as indicated by soil test, species present and intended use.	Increases soil fertility and helps regulate legume composition.	Earlier and more uniform grazing, increased productivity, maintenance of legume and grass composition.
(2) When forage is 4 – 6" high.	Begin rotation grazing.	To graze all forage before hay stage.	Longer grazing season, greater seasonal productivity.
(3) After first grazing.	Begin each subsequent grazing when forage is 8 – 10" high after 3 – 4 week rest period.	Allows plants to store root reserve for new growth.	Faster recovery following grazing and greater seasonal production.
(4) After each grazing.	Harrow and clip if needed.	Distributes droppings. Controls weeds.	More uniform grazing and quality, prevents spot grazing, weed control.
	Irrigate if dry.	Stimulates regrowth, increases yield.	Abundant forage for grazing.
(5) When ungrazed forages approach hay stage.	Mow and make hay.	Prevents forage from becoming too mature.	High quality hay, weed control.
(6) Fall, winter and early spring.	Apply barnyard manure if available.	To save fertility and supply nutrients for plant growth.	Increased yield.
CAUTIONS:			
(7) When pastures have 60 percent or more of legumes, limit area to be grazed and graze with caution and keep animals under surveillance.		Live animals.	
(8) Do not over irrigate.		Saves water, prevents loss of nutrients through leaching.	
(9) Do not graze when wet.		Less soil compaction and trampling, improved tilth, higher yields.	
(10) Use nitrogen with discretion on pastures containing legumes.		Maintains an optimum amount of legume (40 – 60%).	

GENERAL SUGGESTIONS

1. DRYLOT LIVESTOCK (Horses, Cattle & Sheep) after grazing season to protect pasture grasses from overgrazing, weed infestation and compacting soil.

2. Rip irrigated pastures 30" deep and 36" apart every five years in the fall when the soil is dry.

3. A basic fertilizer program is scheduled below:
   a. January, February or March – apply 70 lbs. of Actual Nitrogen/acre.
   b. Approximately June 30 – apply 50 lbs. of Actual Nitrogen/acre.
   c. Approximately July 31 – apply 50 lbs. of Actual Nitrogen/acre.

4. Will probably have to make hay on one or two sections of pasture in June after applying early spring fertilizer.

5. Need rotation grazing alternatives:
   a. 3 pasture rotation – graze 10 days and move to next pasture (each pasture has 20 days rest).
   b. 4 pasture rotation – graze 7 days and move to next pasture (each pasture has 21 days rest).

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